

# WELCOME!

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020**

# Process & Issues

WALK THROUGH THE  
TOWN MEETING  
WARRANT

# Town Meeting Warrant

“Warning” of the meeting

- General Subject Matter

Prepared by the Select Board

25 Signatures can put a petition Warrant  
Article on the Warrant

- Must appear as written
- Only enforceable if legal
- 2 Petitioned Articles this year

Some are “Special”

# 2020 Town Meeting Warrant

MARCH 10 AND 21, 2019

# Article 1



**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in March-Official  
Ballot Voting – March 10, 2020**



**This year:**

- 1 Moderator
- 1 Treasurer
- 1 Supervisor of the Checklist
- 2 Budget Committee Members
- 2 Library Trustees
- 1 Cemetery Trustee



**Other elected position is Town  
Clerk/Tax Collector**

# Article 2

## **Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance**

1. Change the allowable uses in Business District (B-1).
2. Change the underlying zoning from Industrial (M-1) to newly modified Business District (B-1).
3. Adopt a “Commerce & Community Overlay District.

# Zoning Amendments

## Background

1. Economic Development Committee working to expand tax base
2. MTAG Grant received – “to support a range of housing choices and increase supply of affordable housing.
3. Focus on the area near intersection of Maple St./Routes 202/9
  - a) Where TIF District was formed in 2017
  - b) Where land swap with State of NH is almost complete
4. More than 30 interviews conducted across community to
  - a) Get a sense of the vision residents have for development in the West Hopkinton area and Hopkinton in general
  - b) Identify concerns residents may have
  - c) Develop an understanding of strengths, weakness, and opportunities of Hopkinton’s economy & home choices

# 5 MTAG Interview Key Findings

## RESIDENTS LOVE:

Rural character & community feel

Good regional access

Good public services like schools, library, emergency services, and senior center

# 5 MTAG Interview Key Findings

## DIVERSITY OF HOUSING CHOICES IS HARD TO FIND:

Housing is expensive

Not enough smaller homes and rental housing  
for the young starting out and seniors  
downsizing

**5 MTAG  
Interview  
Key  
Findings**

**CONCERNS FOR WEST HOPKINTON:**

Safety of dangerous/high traffic intersection

Develop retail carefully to protect/support  
businesses in Contoocook

# 5 MTAG Interview Key Findings

FOCUS SHOULD BE ON:

Age-restricted housing or a retirement community to allow aging residents to remain in town

# 5 MTAG Interview Key Findings

## MIXED USE:

(i.e., residential, neighborhood-scale commercial, open space/recreation) was widely supported to diversify and increase tax base

# Proposed Zoning Amendments

## CHANGE ALLOWABLE USES IN BUSINESS DISTRICT (B-1):

To discourage large-lot single family development

To allow multifamily & affordable housing and recreation, retail, and commercial-type uses

# Proposed Zoning Amendments

CHANGE UNDERLYING ZONING FROM INDUSTRIAL (M-1) TO THE MODIFIED B-1

The land surrounding the intersection of Maple St./Routes 202/9

Land along Maple St. across from the Rowell Covered Bridge (old paper mill/Bioenergy site)

# Proposed Zoning Amendments

## ADOPT A “COMMERCE & COMMUNITY OVERLAY DISTRICT

Would allow more dense residential  
development

Provide incentive (increase unit density) for  
developers who provide affordable and/or  
senior housing and/or community amenities (i.e.  
recreational spaces, community spaces)

Everything we have discussed so far will be on the Tuesday, March 10 ballot. Everything from here on will be discussed at the Business Session on Saturday, March 21.

## **Article 3 – Road Bond**

Must be discussed first at Saturday meeting

Must receive 2/3 vote

Must be by paper ballot

Voting must be open 1 hour

# Review of Pending Road Project

## Projects that should be done now:

- Chip Seal 18 Roads 392,258
- Shim & Overlay 17 Roads 1,286,809
- Reclaim & Rebuild 20 Roads 3,954,771
- Culverts & Bridges 2,230,000

**TOTAL = \$7,863,838**

# Road Bond Article

\$2,200,000 road bond for road, bridge and culvert rehabilitation (Tax impact begins in 2021).

Will largely pay for culvert replacement

**Bond will be  
used for**

Kearsarge Avenue	\$ 430,000
Briar Hill #2	390,000
Briar Hill #3	390,000
Bound Tree #1	130,000
Bound Tree #2	330,000
Tyler Bridge Re-decking	<u>530,000</u>
	<b>\$2,200,000</b>

## **Factors leading to this proposal**

Stickney Hill Road was closed because the “bridge” was not safe for traffic.

The culvert planned for Briar Hill Road was used on Stickney Hill Road leaving 2 culverts needing replacement.

Permits for Briar Hill will expire in 2021.

There is a metal plate over a major culvert on Kearsarge Avenue.

# Road Bond Article

## Bond Cost

- 10 year bond at 2.25% interest – conservative estimate
- Total interest costs: \$302,500
- Year 1 (2021) payment
  - \$299,750 = .39 on tax rate - \$300,000 property = \$117.00
- Year 10 (2030) payment
  - \$224,475 = .29 on tax rate - \$300,000 property = \$ 87.00

# OFFICIAL BALLOT REFERENDUM FORM OF MEETING

## **Article 4 – SB2**

Must be discussed first at  
Saturday meeting (new this  
year)

Must receive 3/5 vote

Must be by paper ballot

Voting must be open 1 hour

# What is an Official Ballot Referenda (SB2)?

## A FORM OF TOWN MEETING GOVERNMENT WITH TWO SESSIONS

First Session – Deliberative – for the explanation, discussion, debate and amendments to the proposed operating budget and warrant articles to go on the ballot

Second Session – Voting – voters vote on all warrant articles at the local election on the second Tuesday in March, at the same time as local elections. Only can vote “yes” or “no”

## **How will this change what we do now?**

The Deliberative Session is similar to traditional Town Meeting, but only vote on wording of article

Deliberative Sessions are held in late January/early February

Voting on each article is by ballot at the Tuesday election. Can only vote “yes” or “no”

If budget doesn't get a majority, then it goes to a “Default Budget”

# What is a default budget?

The budget that is adopted when the proposed operating budget fails, if a special meeting is not called to reconsider the operating budget.

The Default Budget is created by the governing body

The Default Budget is the previous year's budget minus one-time expenses plus contractual obligations adjusted for debt service. Actually, it is complicated

Now we'll look at the  
Expenditure Articles  
together to show the total  
tax impact.

# Article 5 – Operating Budget



## Municipal Budget Act

Budget Committee  
presents budgets



## Tax Rate Components

Municipal – Select Board  
School – School Board  
County – County  
Commissioners  
Precincts – Precinct  
Commissioners



We will look at Town (municipal)  
only

## Steps in Creating the Budget

Department Heads prepare budget requests and work with Town Administrator.

Operating Budget presented to Select Board – Capital Expenses presented to CIP Committee.

CIP Committee recommends to Select Board.

Select Board creates its Budget for presentation to the Budget Committee.

Budget Committee, after a public hearing presents its budget to Town Meeting.

## **Difficult year**

This has been one of the most difficult years to prepare this budget and no one is happy with the results...

# Final Results

<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Change in Tax Impact	\$ 421,350	
<b>CRF/Trust Fund Funding</b>		
Change in Tax Impact	\$ 343,500	
<b>Individual Warrant Articles</b>		
Change in Tax Impact	\$ 0	
<b>Use of Fund Balance</b>		
Change in Tax Impact	-\$ 215,000	
<b>2020 Estimated to be raised by taxes</b>		
\$5,243,045	+\$390,485	8.05%
<b>2020 Estimated Town Portion Tax Rate</b>		
\$6.75/thousand	+\$ 0.50	7.87%

Let's do the  
numbers...



# Revenue

Estimated Revenues of \$3,379,592

- Increase of \$123,673 - 3.80%

## Major Drivers:

- Land Use Change Tax - \$ 32,000
- Motor Vehicle Registrations 80,000
- Municipal Aid From State 49,891
- Income from Sewer Fund 60,603
- Transfer Station Commercial -20,000
- Recycling Revenue -10,000

# Operating Budget

Total Operating Budget of \$7,703,736

- Increase of \$421,350 - 5.79%

Major Drivers:

◦ TC/TC PT Wages	\$ 21,956
◦ Merit Wage Pool (3.0%)	78,142
◦ Health Insurance (6.4% GM)	121,175
◦ Police FT Wages	27,610
◦ DPW FT Wages	23,385
◦ Sewer Increase (offset by Revenue)	60,603

# Warrant Article for CRF & Trusts

Total Warrant Articles of \$890,500

- Increase of \$343,500 - 62.80%

Major Drivers:

- Fire Vehicle Replacement  
\$127,500
- Road and Culvert Rehabilitation 100,000
- Ambulance Replacement 50,000
- Library Building Systems 20,000
- Library Buildings & Grounds 41,000
- Sewer Equip./Sludge Removal 30,000
- Town Facilities Maintenance Trust -20,000

# Use of Undesignated Fund Balance

Total use of Fund Balance to offset taxes  
\$350,000

- Increase of \$215,000 - 159.3%

# Summary of Proposed 2020 Budget Tax Rate Impact

## TO BE RAISED BY TAXES:

<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
\$4,852,560	\$5,243,045	\$ 390,485	8.05%

## TAX RATE:

<u>2019</u>	<u>2019*</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
\$ 6.25	\$ 6.75	\$ 0.50	7.87%

\*-Estimated using 2019 actual property valuation.

**Articles  
Covered by  
those  
numbers**

Article 5 – Operating  
Budget

Article 6 – Appropriation  
to Capital Reserve Funds

Article 7 – Appropriation  
to Expendable Trust Funds

**Articles 15 &  
16  
Special  
Revenue  
Funds**



Pay-by-Bag Fund (\$120,000)



Senior Center Rental Fund  
(\$1,380)

**Article 8**  
**Bates**  
**Building**

**Authorization to sell the Bates Building**

# Factors Used to Make this Decision



**Operational Efficiencies**

Departments work together



**Cost Savings**

Duplication of items



**Convenience of Town Services in One Location**

Confusing at times for residents



**Safety and Security of Employees**

Employees shouldn't have to work alone



**Bates Building Back on the Tax Rolls**

# Process from here...



Town Meeting vote



Approval from Probate Court



Assuring that Supervisors of the Checklist and archives are ready for the move



Selling the building.

# Articles 9, 10, 11, & 12



Changes to Exemptions & Credits



Common after a revaluation.



# Disabled Exemption- New

## **Article 10: Adoption of Disabled Exemption**

Shall the Town adopt the provisions of RSA 72:37-b, Exemption for the Disabled from property tax, based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to be \$100,000. To qualify the person must be eligible under Title II or Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act for benefits to the disabled, have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, and own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 consecutive years. The exemption may apply only to property that is occupied as the principal place of abode of the disabled person. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$50,000 or if married, a combined net income of not more than \$60,000, and own net assets not in excess of \$150,000 excluding the value of the person's residence.

***(Majority Vote Required).***

*(The Select Board recommends this article (5-0)).*

# Modification to Service- Connected Total Disability

## **Article 11: Modification of Optional Service-Connected Total Disability**

Shall the Town modify the previously adopted provisions of RSA 72:35 optional tax credit on residential property for a Service-Connected Total Disability by increasing the amount of the credit to \$4,000? This tax credit is only available to a person who has been honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from the military service of the United States and who has total and permanent service-connected disability, or who is a double amputee or paraplegic because of service-connected injury, or the surviving spouse of such a person. This tax credit may be applied only to property which is occupied as the principal place of abode by the disabled person or the surviving spouse.

***(Majority Vote Required).***

*(The Select Board recommends this article (5-0)).*

# Modification of Solar Exemption

## **Article 12: Modification of Solar Exemption**

Shall the Town adopt the provisions of RSA 72:61-64 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with solar energy systems intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value up to \$25,000 of qualifying solar energy system equipment under these statutes.

***(Majority Vote Required).***

*(The Select Board recommends this article (5-0)).*

# LUCT Change

## **Article 13: Modify LUCT Percentage Allocated to Conservation Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize 100% of the Land Use Change Tax collected pursuant to RSA 79-A:25 to be deposited into the existing Conservation Fund in accordance with RSA 36-A:5. III, as authorized by RSA 79-A:25, II. If adopted this article shall take effect April 1, 2020 and shall remain in effect until altered or rescinded by a future vote of the town meeting.

***(Majority Vote Required).***

*(The Select Board recommends this article (5-0)).*

# Clarifying Amendment to Hart's Corner TIF District Plan

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## Statement of Objectives

The purpose of the District is to fund improvements to roads, intersections, sidewalk lighting, signage, utility poles and lines, landscaping, or other associated improvements to create economic vitality and ensure the continued economic vitality of those areas to be developed. The funds may also be used to purchase property for resale in order to promote development. Pursuant to the enabling legislation, RSA 162-K, some of the valid purposes of the TIF district include: the acquisition of land; the improvement of physical facilities, and transportation through acquisition or construction; the accommodation of pedestrians; and the installation of landscaping and streetscaping. It is recognized that this District could be used to develop a commercial and/or multi-family residential development area in the Town that could provide jobs and services, and could represent an important part of the ~~non-residential~~ tax base.

## District Development Plan

The Town at the 2017 Town Meeting voted to expand the M-1 (Industrial) District in this area and has charged the Economic Development Committee with encouraging development. Studies have shown that development in this area is desirable due to its access to Route 89 and Interstate 89.

It is the purpose in forming this district to encourage revitalization, re-investment, and investment within those portions of Town that are in this TIF District zoned for commercial development. Without improvements to both the physical infrastructure and visual appearance of this area, the existing tax base could erode. Without infrastructure, this key area is not being developed in a few low-valuation, large single-family lots on many acres with new development and School District services to remote locations of Town.

# By Petition

## **Article 17: New Hampshire Resolution for Fair Districting**

To see if the Town will urge that the New Hampshire General Court which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the 2020 census will do so in a manner that ensures fair and effective representation of New Hampshire voters. That in order to fulfill this obligation the New Hampshire General Court shall appoint an independent redistricting commission that draws the new district maps in a way that does not rely on partisan data such as election results or party registration or favor particular parties or candidates.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from the Select Board to the town of Hopkinton's state legislators and to the Governor of New Hampshire informing them of the instructions from their constituents within 30 days of the vote.

***(By Petition).***

***(Majority vote required).***

*(The Select Board recommends this article (5-0)).*

Last and  
probably least

**Article 12: Other Legal Business**

To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

QUESTIONS?